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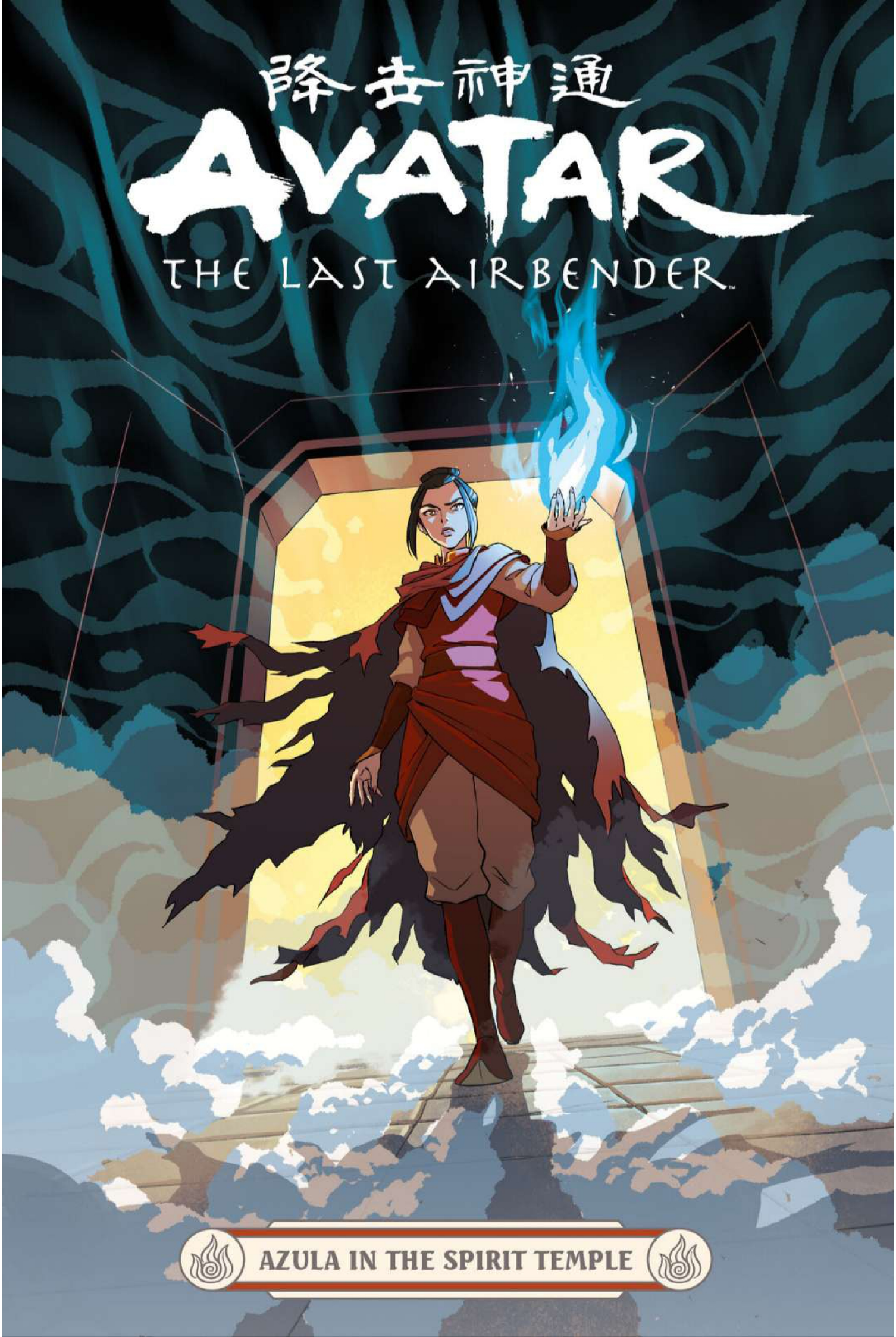
AVATAR

THE LAST AIRBENDER™



AZULA IN THE SPIRIT TEMPLE

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AZULA IN THE SPIRIT TEMPLE

Script
FAITH ERIN HICKS

Art
PETER WARTMAN

Colors
ADELE MATERA

Lettering
RICHARD STARKINGS &
COMICRAFT'S JIMMY BETANCOURT

DARK HORSE BOOKS

president and publisher
MIKE RICHARDSON

editor
RACHEL ROBERTS

associate editor
JENNY BLENK

assistant editor
ANASTACIA FERRY

collection designer
SARAH TERRY

digital art technician
SAMANTHA HUMMER

martial arts consultant and model
TODD BALTHAZOR

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and Joan Hilty at Avatar Studios, and to Dave Marshall at Dark Horse.

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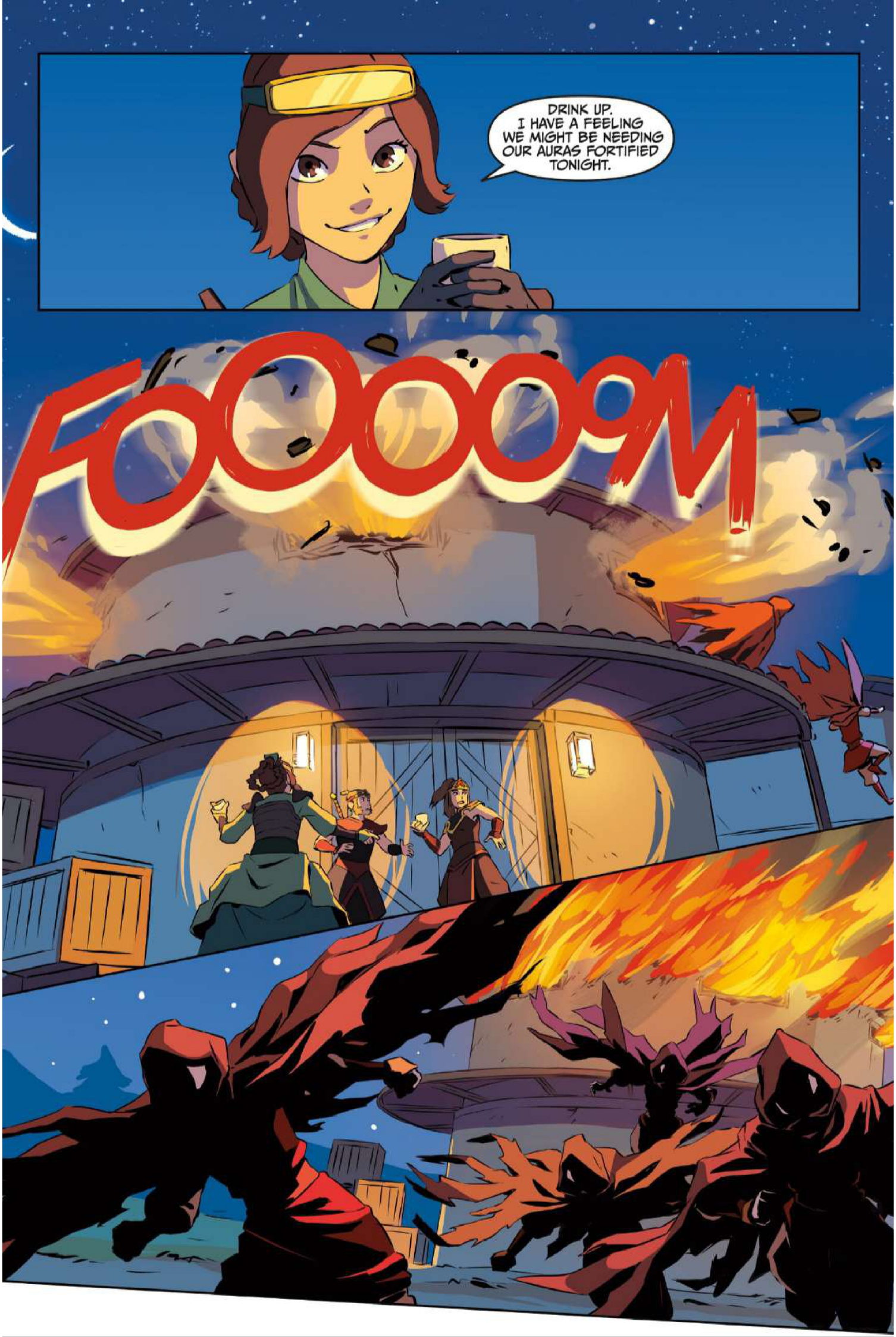
SOME ARE WORTHY, SOME WILL NEVER BE.
I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.
GO. YOU KNOW THE PLAN.

YAWWN! WHAT A DULL NIGHT.
DON'T FALL ASLEEP ON ME.
I HATE WORKING THE GRAVEYARD SHIFT.
WHY ARE WE GUARDING THIS PLACE, ANYWAY? WHO WOULD ATTACK A GRANARY?

WHO GOES THERE? IDENTIFY YOURSELF!
HELLO! JUST CHECKING IN!
TY LEE! NOTHING TO REPORT, ALL'S WELL.
THOUGHT I'D BRING TEA TO HELP YOU SURVIVE YOUR BORING NIGHT.
YOU'RE A LIFESAVER.
LIFE WITHOUT TEA JUST ISN'T WORTH LIVING. SOME DAYS I'M COUNTING THE HOURS UNTIL MY NEXT CUP.
FFT


DRINK UP. I HAVE A FEELING WE MIGHT BE NEEDING OUR AURAS FORTIFIED TONIGHT.
FOOOOOM

SPRING THE TRAP!
AHG, HOT!

YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE ATTACKING A FULL GRAIN DISTRIBUTION CENTER WITH ONLY TWO GUARDS TO DEFEND IT, HUH? GUESS AGAIN!
THAT BUILDING YOU BLEW UP HAS NOTHING BUT EMPTY CRATES INSIDE, AND THERE'S A LOT MORE THAN TWO GUARDS HERE.
I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY THIS TIME, AZULA. FIRE LORD ZUKO HAS HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR MISCHIEF.
FOOM

AHHGH!
TAK
TAK
TAK
CHIYOU!
LET HER GO!
WOOSH
FWOOM

TOO SLOW!
WOOSH
FOOM
WUD
KRRK
KRAKOOL
GET UP.

CHIYOU! WE NEED TO GET CHIYOU!
LEAVE HER.
BOOM
THIS ISN'T OVER, AZULA! I'M GONNA FIND YOU!
I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY!

LATER-
WE NEED A PLAN TO RESCUE CHIYOU!
WHERE WOULD THEY TAKE HER? A PRISON? WOULD THEY SEND HER BACK TO THE INSTITUTION WE BROKE OUT OF?
AZULA, ARE YOU *LISTENING* TO ME?? THEY'VE GOT CHIYOU!
WE'RE NOT GOING BACK FOR HER.
BUT WE HAVE TO! SHE'S ONE OF US! A FIRE WARRIOR.
AND AS A FIRE WARRIOR, SHE SHOULD ACCEPT THAT SOMETIMES THERE ARE CASUALTIES OF WAR.

THIS ISN'T A WAR! ATTACKING WAREHOUSES AND SABOTAGING FOOD SUPPLIES TO UNDERMINE FIRE LORD ZUKO IS PATHETIC!
YOU PROMISED WE'D BE DOING WORK TO HELP THE FIRE NATION'S DOWNTRODDEN, NOT SKULKING AROUND IN THE DARK LIKE CRIMINALS.
THIS ISN'T WHAT WE SIGNED UP FOR, AZULA.
WE'RE NOT PAWNS TO BE THROWN AWAY IN THIS FIGHT AGAINST YOUR BROTHER.
WE'RE PUTTING OURSELVES IN DANGER BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT WE ALL AGREED TO.
WE WANT TO-- WE NEED TO MOVE ON FROM UNDERMINING FIRE LORD ZUKO.
WE WANT TO FOCUS ON OTHER THINGS.

ZIRIN, PLEASE REMIND ME: WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I FOUND YOU?
THE INSTITUTION.

AH, YES, IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME.
YOU WERE THE DAUGHTERS OF THE FIRE NATION'S MOST *TRADITIONAL* FAMILIES, TOO *REBELLIOUS* TO FIT THE ROLES YOUR PARENTS DEMANDED OF YOU. SO THEY ABANDONED YOU TO THE INSTITUTE, IN THE HOPES YOU'D BE TAUGHT HUMILITY AND *RESPECT.*

I *FREED* YOU. ALL OF YOU! YOU WERE *NOTHING,* LITTLE SCRAPS OF HUMANITY DRIFTING DOWN THE RIVER OF LIFE. I GAVE YOU *PURPOSE.*
A PLACE TO *BELONG.*

NOW YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU WANT TO THROW AWAY WHAT WE'VE BUILT TOGETHER?

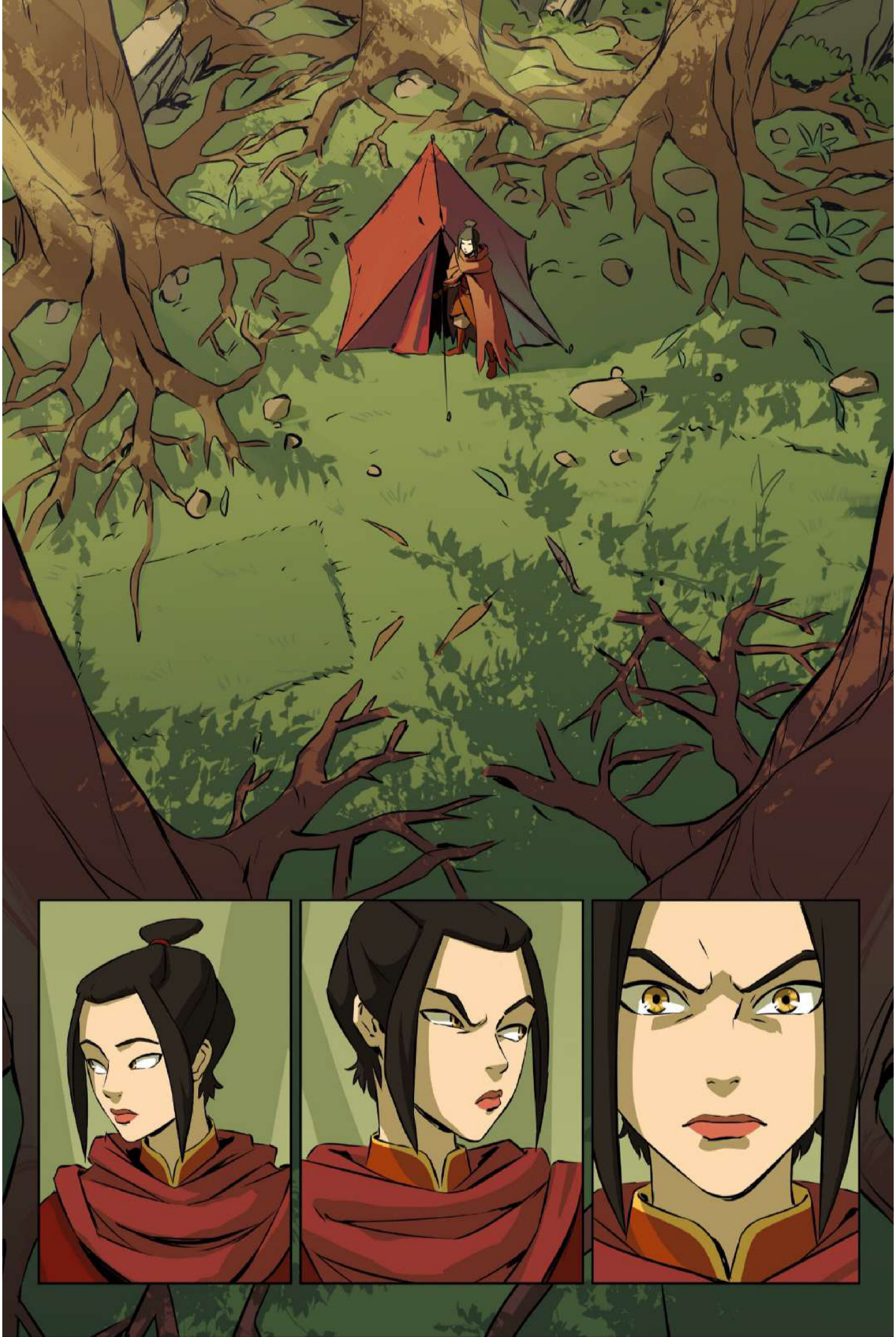
ZIRIN, *YOU* DON'T GET TO TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED. I WILL TELL YOU WHAT YOU NEED.

AND WHAT ***YOU NEED*** IS TO CONTINUE OUR REIGN OF TERROR AGAINST THAT WEAKLING ON THE FIRE NATION THRONE, MY DEAR BROTHER ZUZU.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

...YES.

I KNEW YOU WOULD!
GOOD NIGHT, MY BEAUTIFUL FIRE WARRIORS! TOMORROW WILL BE A FINE DAY TO CAUSE CHAOS.

ZIRIN?
SHE'S NEVER GOING TO LET US GO.
IT'S WORSE THAN THAT. SHE DOESN'T EVEN CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO US.
WE HAVE TO SAVE CHIYOU! SHE'D DO THE SAME IF ANY OF US HAD BEEN CAPTURED.
SHE WOULD.



TSS
AHHHHHHHH!
SHOOM

I'LL FIND THEM, THE TRAITORS!

HOW *DARE* THEY THINK THEY CAN TURN THEIR BACKS ON ME! I'LL HUNT THEM DOWN.

I GAVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE FUTURE OF THE FIRE NATION! TO MAKE MY DEAR BROTHER ZUZU INTO A FIRE LORD WORTHY OF THE THRONE.

HOW COULD THEY BE SO UNGRATEFUL! I'LL MAKE THEM *PAY.*

I'LL MAKE THEM PAY.

I'LL MAKE THEM... PAY...

SWSS

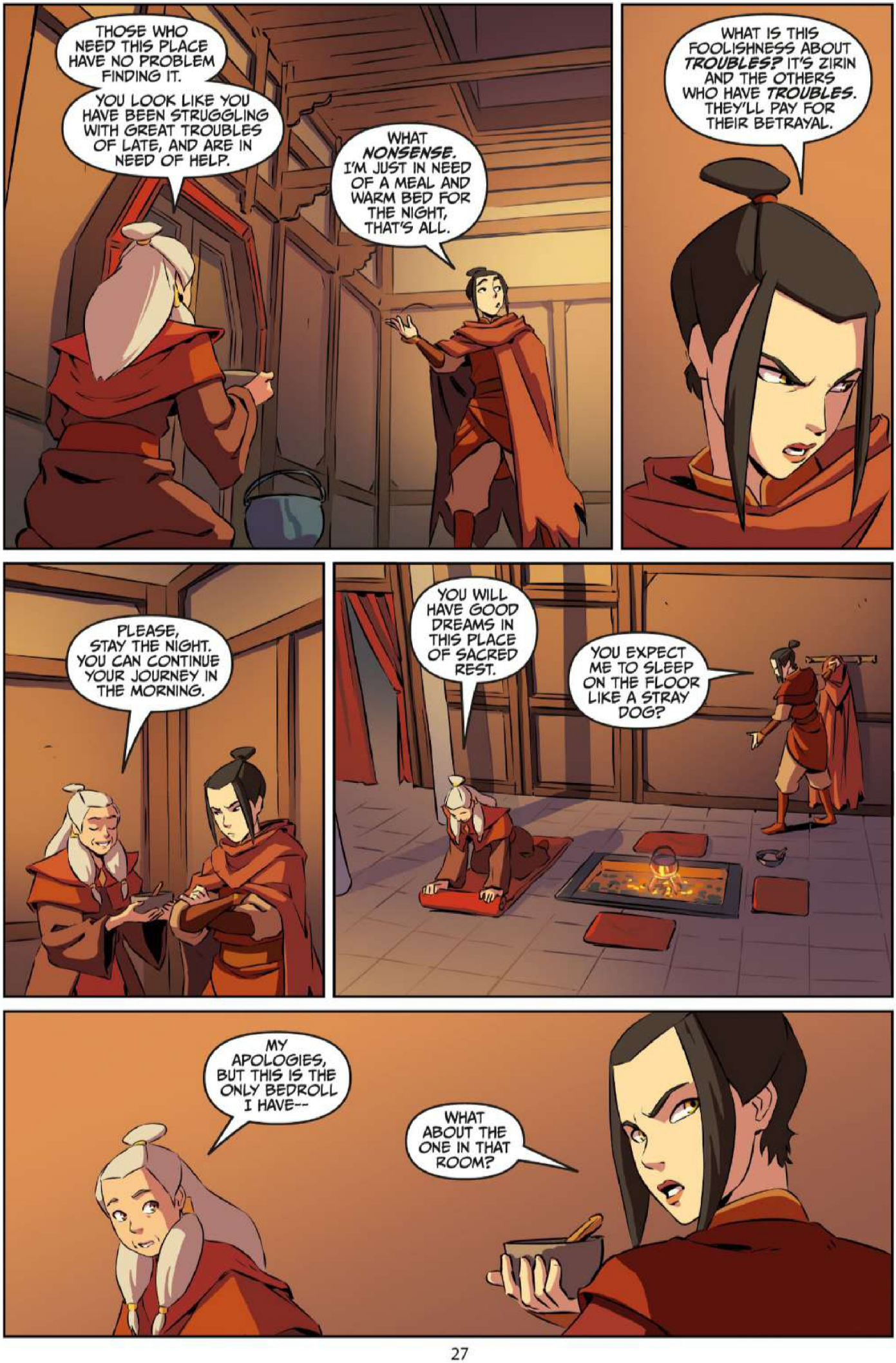
THNK
SPLAT

KRAKOOM
SHAAAAAAAAAA

I NEVER KNEW THERE WERE ANY FIRE SAGE TEMPLES OUT HERE ...

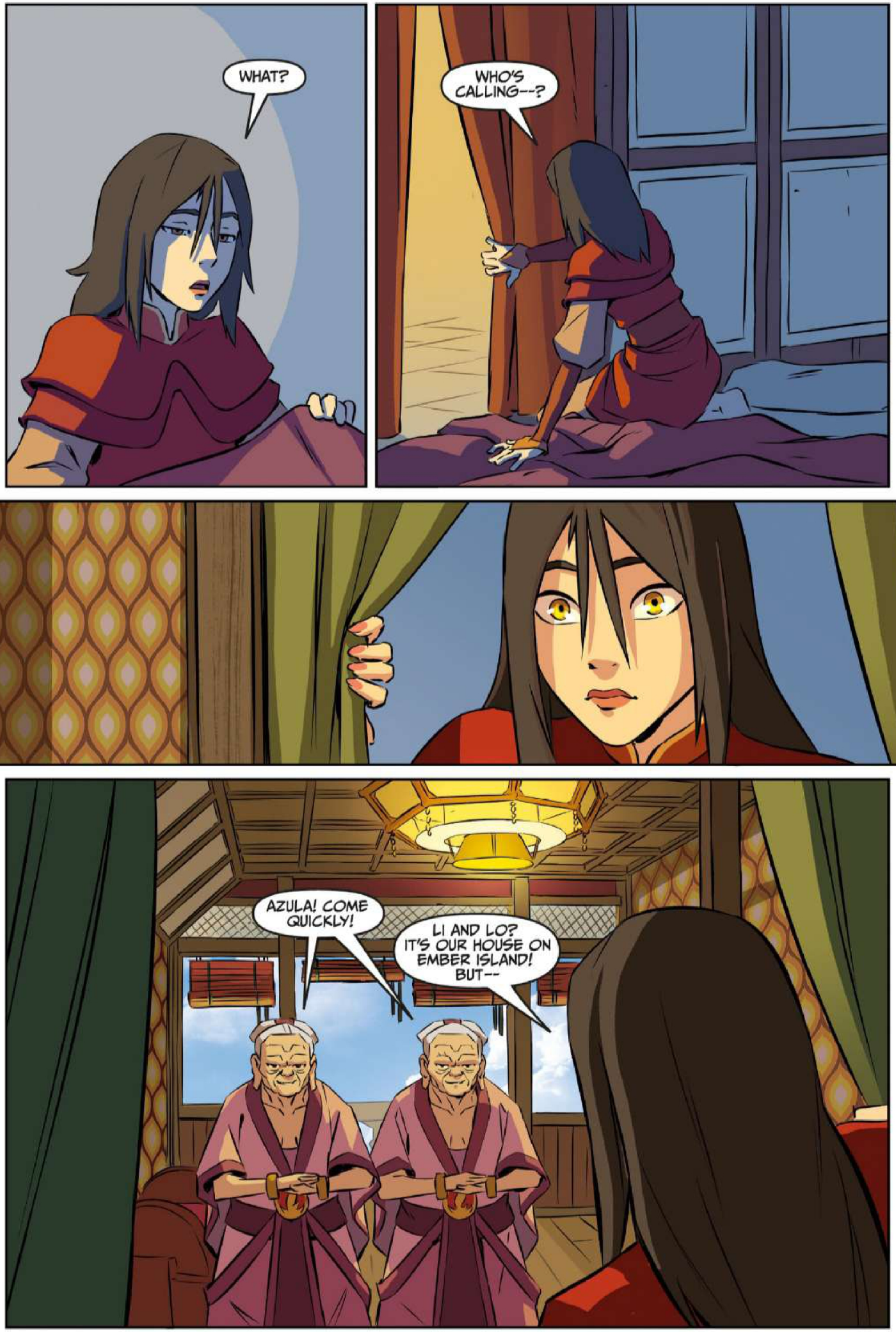
GRMBLE

CRREEEAK
YOU'RE NOT A FIRE SAGE...
AH, A TRAVELLER! WELCOME, WELCOME.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
THIS IS A PLACE OF REFUGE, OF REST FOR THE WEARY.
THEN WHY IS IT IN THE MIDDLE OF A FOREST? NOT LIKELY THAT MANY WEARY TRAVELERS COULD ACTUALLY FIND IT.


THOSE WHO NEED THIS PLACE HAVE NO PROBLEM FINDING IT.
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH GREAT TROUBLES OF LATE, AND ARE IN NEED OF HELP.
WHAT *NONSENSE.* I'M JUST IN NEED OF A MEAL AND WARM BED FOR THE NIGHT, THAT'S ALL.
WHAT IS THIS FOOLISHNESS ABOUT *TROUBLES?* IT'S ZIRIN AND THE OTHERS WHO HAVE *TROUBLES.* THEY'LL PAY FOR THEIR BETRAYAL.
PLEASE, STAY THE NIGHT. YOU CAN CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN THE MORNING.
YOU WILL HAVE GOOD DREAMS IN THIS PLACE OF SACRED REST.
YOU EXPECT ME TO SLEEP ON THE FLOOR LIKE A STRAY DOG?
MY APOLOGIES, BUT THIS IS THE ONLY BEDROLL I HAVE--
WHAT ABOUT THE ONE IN THAT ROOM?

OH, BUT THAT'S MY--
YOUR *WHAT?* THIS PLACE IS FOR *TRAVELERS,* ISN'T IT? BUT YOU'RE KEEPING THE BEST ROOM FOR *YOURSELF?* HOW DARE YOU BE SO SELFISH!
IF YOU PREFER, I AM HAPPY TO GIVE UP MY ROOM FOR YOU.
OF COURSE YOU ARE.
I AM HAPPY... I AM HAPPY TO DO WHATEVER IS REQUIRED TO FACILITATE YOUR STAY.
AT LEAST IT'S CLEAN.

SHFFF
I'LL MAKE THEM PAY...
AZULA.


WHAT?
WHO'S CALLING--?
AZULA! COME QUICKLY!
LI AND LO? IT'S OUR HOUSE ON EMBER ISLAND! BUT--

NO TIME, NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS!
EVERYONE'S WAITING, YOU MUST HURRY!
EVERYONE? WHO'S EVERYONE?

EVERYONE, YOUR HIGHNESS! EVERYONE WHO LOVES YOU!

WHY IS IT SO BRIGHT?

AZULA! MY FAVORITE CHILD!
CONQUEROR OF BA SING SE!
YOU KILLED THE AVATAR, SINGLE HANDEDLY ENDING THE HUNDRED YEAR WAR!
YOU WERE NAMED FIRE LORD AFTER YOUR FATHER ASCENDED TO PHOENIX KING.
YOUR HAIR IS AMAZING AND YOU SMELL GREAT!

THIS ISN'T RIGHT. ISN'T THE AVATAR ALIVE? I THOUGHT...
I CAN'T REMEMBER.
AZULA.
I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.
YOU... ARE?
YES, DAUGHTER. SO PROUD.
UGH. THIS ISN'T REAL, YOU KNOW.

AS IF YOUR MOM WOULD BE PROUD OF YOU.
YEAH, DIDN'T YOU TELL US SHE THOUGHT YOU WERE A MONSTER? PRETTY SUSPICIOUS.
SHUT UP. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
SURE I DO. I KNOW THE REAL YOU, AZULA.
NONE OF THIS ACTUALLY HAPPENED.
I SAID--
SHUT UP!

WHAT--?
THE DREAMS DID NOT GIVE YOU PEACE--YOU MUST LEAVE NOW!
YOU MUST GO!
I'LL GO! SO MUCH FOR WELCOMING WEARY TRAVELERS.

GO, GO, GO!
GET AWAY FROM ME!
WHAT IS THIS MIST??

I'VE ESCAPED, I'M NOT A CAPTIVE, I'M FREE, EVERYTHING IS--
IMPOSSIBLE! THAT WOMAN, SHE'S TRYING TO HOLD ME HERE?? AGAINST MY WILL? IMPOSSIBLE!
SHE HAS NO *IDEA* WHO SHE'S DEALING WITH, I'LL SHOW HER THE *TRUE MEANING* OF FEAR.

IT'S ALL WRONG, IT'S GONE ALL WRONG...

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
THIS IS A PLACE... A PLACE OF REFUGE! OF HOPE FOR THE WEARY...

IT'S A TRAP SET BY MY ENEMIES, THAT'S WHAT IT IS. I'VE GOT TO FIGHT MY WAY OUT.

ZUZU'S NOT SMART ENOUGH TO MAKE SOMETHING LIKE THIS. MAYBE THE AVATAR?
PLEASE, YOU MUST LEAVE. YOU DID NOT FIND PEACE IN YOUR DREAMS, I CANNOT CONTROL WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

WHAT ARE YOU WHIMPERING ABOUT? CONTROL WHAT?
WHAT'S THIS? MORE TRICKS?
...WAIT. I REMEMBER THIS.
AZULA. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU WERE FIREBENDING.
SHE WAS FIREBENDING!
SHE'S A PRODIGY TO BE BENDING AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE! THIS IS WONDERFUL, AZULA.
HAHAHA!

TELL YOUR DAUGHTER HOW AMAZING SHE IS, URSA. TELL HER HOW *PROUD* YOU ARE.
MOM?
YOU ARE YOUR FATHER'S DAUGHTER, AZULA.

KRAKK
OH, AZULA, I AM SO PROUD OF YOU!
WHAT A SPECIAL GIRL! FIREBENDING AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE!
A RARE TALENT!

YOU'RE A POWERFUL BENDER, AZULA. THE GREATEST THE FIRE NATION HAS EVER SEEN.
EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED WILL BE YOURS.
WAIT. THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED.
MY MOTHER WASN'T *HAPPY* I WAS A FIREBENDER, SHE WAS AFRAID. AFRAID *FOR* ME, AFRAID *OF* ME.
...WASN'T SHE?

I'M JUST TRYING TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU *WANT.*
WHAT MADE YOU THINK THAT FALSE VISION WAS WHAT I WANTED?
ISN'T YOUR GREATEST DESIRE TO BE LOVED AND EMBRACED BY YOUR FAMILY? WHY CAN'T YOU JUST ACCEPT WHAT IS OFFERED?
YOU WANT ME TO *ACCEPT* YOUR LIES AND MANIPULATIONS?
IF IT HELPS YOU FIND PEACE, WHY NOT?
YOU'RE NO MONK.
FOOM

HSSSSS
I DON'T NEED ANYTHING FROM MY FAMILY! THEY'RE TRAITORS, ALL OF THEM!
EXCEPT MY FATHER.
NOW HE'S A PATHETIC SHADOW OF HIS FORMER SELF! HIS BENDING IS GONE, TAKEN BY THE AVATAR!

I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT WITH ANY CLAIM TO THE FIRE NATION THRONE!
THE LAST TRUE FIRE LORD.
YES! I WILL HAVE WHAT'S OWED TO ME!
DON'T FRET, LITTLE FIRE LORD. I HAVE A FEELING YOU'LL GET WHAT'S COMING TO YOU.
BAM BAM BAM
THNK
OH, HI AZULA.

HOW'D YOU FIND THIS PLACE? IS THIS ANOTHER SPIRIT TRICK?
WE TRACKED YOUR SABOTAGE SQUAD THROUGH THE FOREST BUT THERE WAS A STORM AND I GOT SEPARATED FROM MY KYOSHI SISTERS.
EVENTUALLY I STUMBLED ON A PATH, AND THAT LED TO THIS TEMPLE, AND HERE YOU ARE!
WHAT A COINCIDENCE, HUH? ALL ROADS LEAD TO AZULA!
YOUR PLANS TO CAPTURE ME ALWAYS FAIL MISERABLY. WHY DON'T YOU GIVE UP? CLEARLY YOU'RE AWFUL AT THIS.
MAYBE I JUST LIKE CHASING YOU AROUND, AZULA. IT'S MY NEW HOBBY.
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT? SO CREEPY!
IGNORE HER, THIS PLACE IS FULL OF NONSENSE. I DON'T EVEN THINK SHE'S REAL.

THIS TEMPLE DOES HAVE SOME WEIRD ENERGY, I'LL GIVE IT THAT.
HI THERE! WANT ME TO READ YOUR AURA?
STOP TRYING TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH THAT THING AND FIGHT ME!
UGH, DO I HAVE TO?
YEAH, I INSIST.
FWOOOM
THAT STUPID DRESS IS REALLY SLOWING YOU DOWN. REMIND ME WHY YOU'RE WEARING IT?
BECAUSE I JOINED THE KYOSHI WARRIORS AND THIS IS WHAT THEY WEAR!
FWOOSH

WHY'D YOU JOIN THAT BAND OF LOSERS? WE WALKED ALL OVER THEM BACK WHEN WE WERE HUNTING THE AVATAR.
THAT WAS A GOOD FIGHT.
UGH, ALL I REMEMBER FROM THAT TIME WAS CONSTANT STRESS AND ANXIETY! MY AURA WAS A MESS!
OH, SHUT UP, YOU LOVED IT! WE WERE A TEAM--YOU, ME, AND MAI! AND THEN MAI HAD TO RUIN IT ALL FOR STUPID ZUZU!
IT MAKES ME SO MAD! SHE BROKE UP OUR TEAM FOR A STUPID BOY WHO DIDN'T EVEN WANT HER!

Y'KNOW, IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO BE SO OBSESSED WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S RELATIONSHIPS, AZULA. MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET HELP?
DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO!
WHUDD
OOF!
SLUMP

LEAVE ME ALONE.
ARE YOU GOING TO KILL HER?
WHY WOULD I DO THAT?
I'M JUST TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT.

WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT I WANT?
BECAUSE I CARE ABOUT YOU, MY DAUGHTER.
NO. THIS ISN'T REAL.
YOU'RE NOT REAL.

YOU CAN'T BE REAL.
WHAT'S REAL IN THIS PLACE IS FOREVER CHANGING, AZULA. FOR NOW, I'M REAL ENOUGH.
YOU RUINED ME.
HOW SO, DAUGHTER?
YOU CHOSE ZUKO OVER ME. YOU SAVED HIM BY HELPING TO POISON GRANDFATHER AZULON... AND THEN YOU LEFT.
YOU ABANDONED ME. YOU WEREN'T THERE TO PROTECT ME FROM DAD, SO I BECAME WHAT HE WANTED--HIS DEADLY FIREBENDING WEAPON.
I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE.

IF YOU'D JUST LET DAD KILL ZUKO, YOU COULD HAVE STAYED WITH ME. YOU WOULD HAVE PROTECTED ME FROM HIM!
I WOULDN'T BE...THIS.
WHAT ARE YOU, AZULA?
ALONE. BETRAYED. BETRAYED OVER AND OVER, BY MY BROTHER, MY UNCLE, MY FRIENDS, MY ACOLYTES.
THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN LOYAL TO ME TO THE VERY END, BUT THEY WEREN'T! THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!

SO WHAT YOU WANT MOST IN THE WORLD IS FOR THOSE WHO BROKE YOUR TRUST--YOUR FAMILY, YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR ACOLYTES--TO RETURN AND ASK YOUR FORGIVENESS?
FOR THEM TO ACKNOWLEDGE HOW THEY HURT YOU, AND PROMISE NEVER TO DO SO AGAIN?
...YES.
OH, PLEASE.

YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY BELIEVE *YOU'RE* THE VICTIM HERE, AZULA.
MAI??
REALLY?? *SHE'S* SPIRIT TRICKERY TOO?
I'M NOT PLAYING YOUR GAMES ANYMORE, SPIRIT. I'M LEAVING! FOR GOOD THIS TIME!

I'VE GOT A THEORY, AZULA.
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT *YOU* THAT MAKES PEOPLE *WANT* TO BETRAY YOU.

MAYBE YOU'RE A TERRIBLE PERSON WHO GETS WHAT SHE DESERVES.

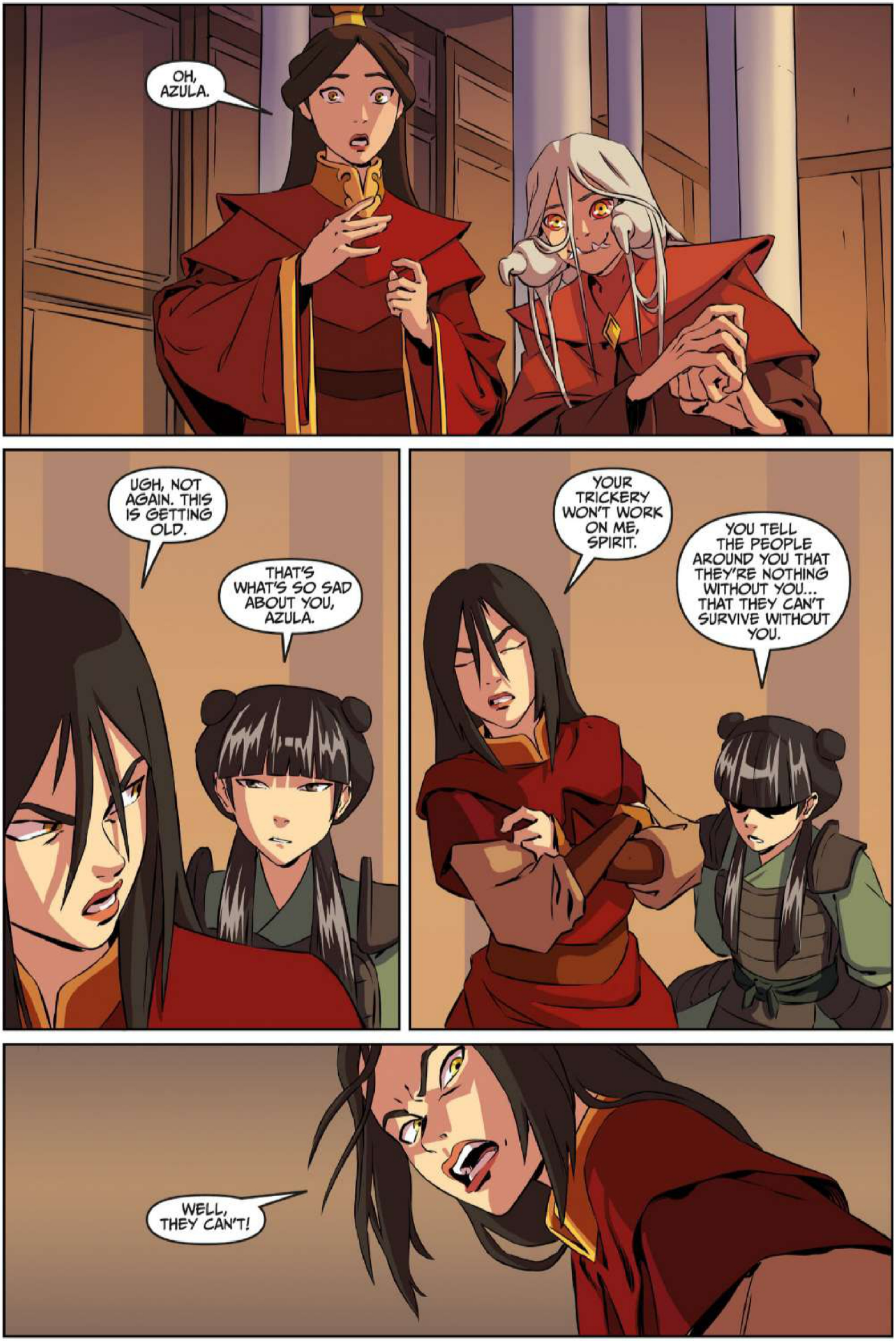
HOW DARE YOU--
TY LEE??
WHO ELSE WOULD I BE?
STOP THIS RIGHT NOW! LET ME SEE WHAT'S REAL!
I'M REAL, AZULA.
ROLL
YOU'RE NOT! I KNEW IT WAS UTTER NONSENSE, YOU TRACKING ME THROUGH THE FOREST!
I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT FOR A SECOND!

YOU BELIEVE A LOT OF NONSENSE. LIKE THAT WE WERE ACTUALLY *FRIENDS*, DESPITE YOU THREATENING MY LIFE TO FORCE ME TO JOIN YOUR AVATAR HUNT.
WHAT *LIFE??* YOU WERE A NOBODY CIRCUS FREAK WHEN I FOUND YOU! BOTH YOU AND MAI, COMPLETE LOSERS.

HAPPY LOSERS, THOUGH. I LOVED THAT CIRCUS.
I GAVE YOU THE CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING *IMPORTANT* INSTEAD OF WASTING YOUR DAYS PERFORMING FOR CROWDS OF PEASANTS.

AND NOW LOOK AT YOU--ONCE YOU HAD THE EAR OF FIRE NATION ROYALTY. NOW YOU'RE RUNNING ERRANDS FOR A PATHETIC GROUP OF FAN DANCERS.

YOU'RE *LESS* THAN NOTHING.


OH, AZULA.
UGH, NOT AGAIN. THIS IS GETTING OLD.
THAT'S WHAT'S SO SAD ABOUT YOU, AZULA.
YOUR TRICKERY WON'T WORK ON ME, SPIRIT.
YOU TELL THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU THAT THEY'RE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU... THAT THEY CAN'T SURVIVE WITHOUT YOU.
WELL, THEY CAN'T!

DON'T TRY TO FOOL YOURSELF, AZULA.
OH, NOW YOU'VE DECIDED TO BE ZUKO? WHAT NEXT, UNCLE IROH?
YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE TO MANIPULATE AND HARM BECAUSE YOU CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF FACING THE WORLD ALONE.
BEING ALONE WOULD MEAN YOU'D HAVE TO DEAL WITH ALL THE HORRIBLE THINGS YOU'VE DONE. THE WAY YOU'VE *HURT* THE PEOPLE WHO CARED FOR YOU.

YOU'RE ALONE, AZULA. NO ONE TO BLAME BUT YOURSELF.
WILL YOU ASK FOR FORGIVENESS?

AZULA!!
Nooo!!!

AZULA, WHAT DID YOU DO?

I SEE THROUGH YOUR LIES, SPIRIT.
I AM FINISHED WITH YOU!!
KRRKLL

VERY WELL, LITTLE "FIRE LORD."

MY MANIFESTATIONS DID NOT LIE: THIS IS A SACRED PLACE OF PEACE AND REST, SHOULD YOU WISH FOR THOSE THINGS.

THIS TEMPLE IS A CROSSROADS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED THE WRONG PATH. IT OFFERS A SECOND CHANCE--TO CHOOSE FOR THE BETTER.

YOU, LITTLE FIRE LORD, WERE OFFERED REDEMPTION AND FORGIVENESS, BUT YOU REJECTED WHAT WE HAD TO GIVE YOU.
I TAKE MANY FORMS, AND IT IS YOUR CRUELTY AND DESIRE FOR VENGEANCE THAT HAS SHAPED ME INTO THIS: A MIRROR OF YOUR OWN INNER SELF.

A MONSTER.

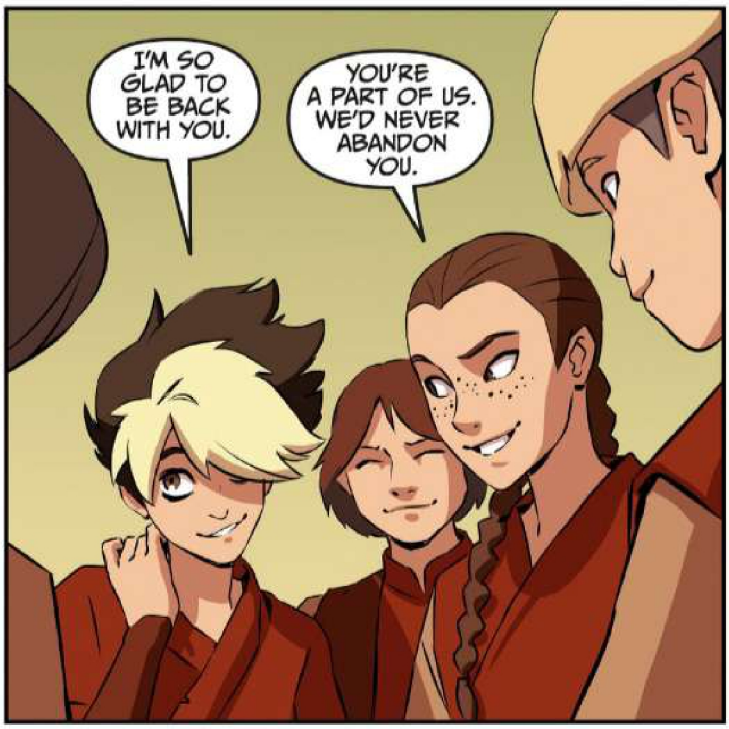
REDEMPTION AND APOLOGIES ARE FOR THE WEAK. I OWE NOTHING.
I AM AZULA, DAUGHTER OF OZAI THE PHOENIX KING! I AM THE RIGHTFUL FIRE LORD!
KRKLE
KRRK
KRRK
AND I DO NOT TAKE KINDLY TO MEDDLING SPIRITS!

KRAKOOOM

HAH!
NOTHING BUT SPIRIT TRICKS! I KNEW NONE OF IT WAS REAL.
ZUZU WOULD HAVE BEEN SCARED STIFF.

AHA. FOUND YOU.

ZIRIN! CHIYOU! THEY MADE IT!
CHIYOU, WELCOME BACK!


I'M SO GLAD TO BE BACK WITH YOU.
YOU'RE A PART OF US. WE'D NEVER ABANDON YOU.

REMEMBER WHAT I SAID WHEN WE ESCAPED THE INSTITUTION?
WE TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER, I KNOW.

SILLY GIRLS. UNWORTHY OF MY LEADERSHIP.
I'LL FIND NEW FOLLOWERS, A NEW PLACE TO RULE.
I ALWAYS DO.
THE END

Azula continues her destabilizing campaign against the Fire Nation and her brother, Fire Lord Zuko. But after a failed attack on her latest target, Azula finds herself in a strange forest temple inhabited by a solitary monk...or is it something more mysterious? Azula must confront her past, and finally face her chance at redemption.

The veteran team of Faith Erin Hicks, Peter Wartman, and Adele Matera is back with a new story in the world of *Avatar: The Last Airbender.*

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